



State of Utah

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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January 2, 1991

TO: File

FROM: Tony Gallegos, Reclamation Engineer; and
Holland Shepherd, Reclamation Specialist

RE: Site Inspection, Aragonite Mine, Lon Thomas-Operator,
M/045/031, Tooele County, Utah

Inspection Date: December 27, 1990
Time: 8:30 - 4:00 PM
Attendees: Rick White and Annush Badii (Property Owners), Maria Soriano (BLM), Wayne Hedberg, Holland Shepherd and Tony Gallegos (DOGM)
Weather: Clear skies, cold, @6 inches of snow cover

The inspection was prompted by a Notice of Intent to Reclaim Mining Operations submitted by the land owners due to inefficient and unsafe mining practices. The mine is currently being operated by Lon Thomas on a lease-back option as part of the sales agreement. The lease-back option terminates when the land owners begin construction of a new mill. The mine site is located on patented land while the mill site is located on BLM land. DOGM has a record of some mining activity at this site under DOE/045/010 with Utah Calcium Company, Inc. as the operator. No mine permit or reclamation plan is currently held by the Division for this operation. Measurements taken from a map submitted by the operators indicates a disturbed area of approximately 16 acres without including the mill site.

The inspection began at the mine site which is located in the SE 1/4 of Sec. 14 and the NE 1/4 of Sec. 23, T1S, R10W, SLBM. The northern part of the mine consists of a larger "V" shaped pit having two near vertical highwalls of approximately 60+ and 100+ feet in height. This pit narrows to @20 feet and becomes shallow as you move north and then deepens and opens up into "V" shape again. The northernmost pit area contains the same type of highwalls and also contains access in the bottom to underground openings. Southeast of this pit is a narrower and smaller "U" shaped pit with highwalls of 60+ feet at angles over 70 degrees. The area adjacent and east of this pit contains numerous bulldozer type disturbances, which extend up the drainages. Signs of mining activity earlier this day were evident in the southern mining area, as the snow had been scraped

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off some of the roads and stockpiled materials had been partially excavated. Northwest of the large pit is an open shaft. At the time of this inspection the safety fencing was not in place. The owners indicated this shaft was @ 180 feet deep. A small shack, metal tank and assorted mining junk were also located near the shaft. Northwest of the pit area are remnants of several buildings, some of which may have historical significance. These buildings would indicate historical mining activity in the area.

Maria Soriano noted that the disturbed area had expanded since a recent site inspection performed by the BLM. At that time, evidence of oil being dumped or spilled on the ground was visible in the mine area.

The mill site was inspected next and is located approximately 4 miles northwest of the mine site and near the site of the Aptus Hazardous Waste Incinerator. The main features of the mill site are a three story mill facility with a storage warehouse, a garage area for large equipment, stockpiled material, a waste dump area, truck scales and several trailers. Activity earlier this day was also evident by snow removal on some of the roads, mined materials placed on the snow and recent work in the equipment garage. A dog was present at the site, probably due to the trailers being used as living quarters. The waste dump area contains waste rock material along with tires, scrap iron, automobiles, and other refuse. Miscellaneous equipment could be found at the site and was generally in a state of disrepair. Diesel fuel has contaminated the ground near the main generator station due to a leak in the tank or in the fixtures. The storage area contained various types of rock products packaged under the name of Utah Calcium Company.

A brief discussion was held after the inspection to evaluate possible courses of action by the owners, the BLM and/or DOGM. A meeting with the Division Director was arranged to discuss the possibility of immediate Division or Board action to prevent further mining activity. In this meeting the owners were asked to provide more information regarding the sales agreement and any other legal actions involving this property. DOGM will contact Tooele County, MSHA, State Health and other agencies in order to collect all possible information which could substantiate immediate Division/Board action.

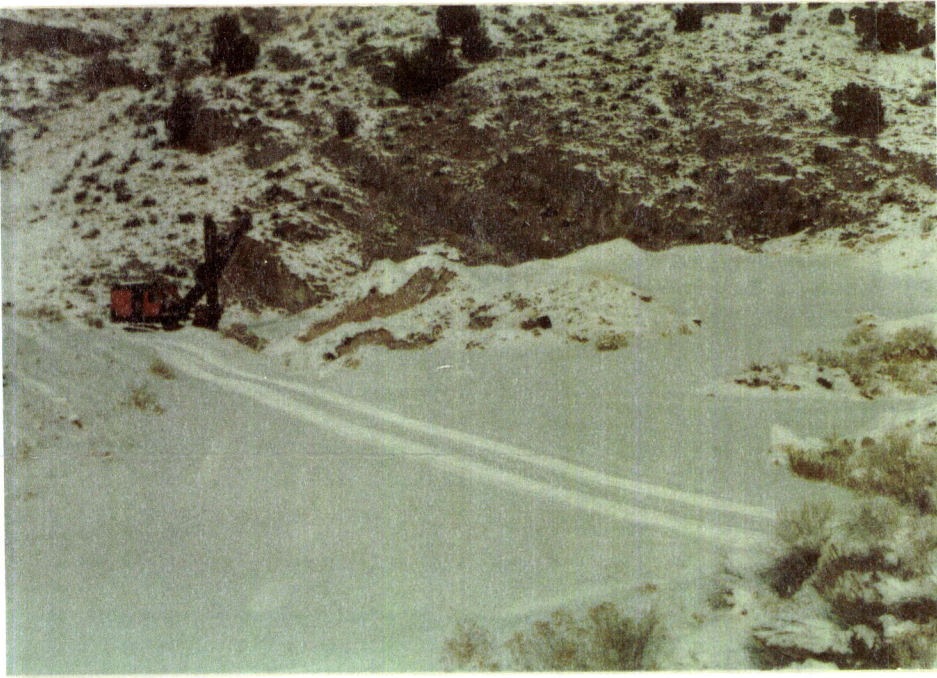
jb

cc: Brent Bradford, State Health
Maria Soriano, BLM, Pony Express RA
Rod Thompson, Tooele Co.
Wayne Hedberg, DOGM

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